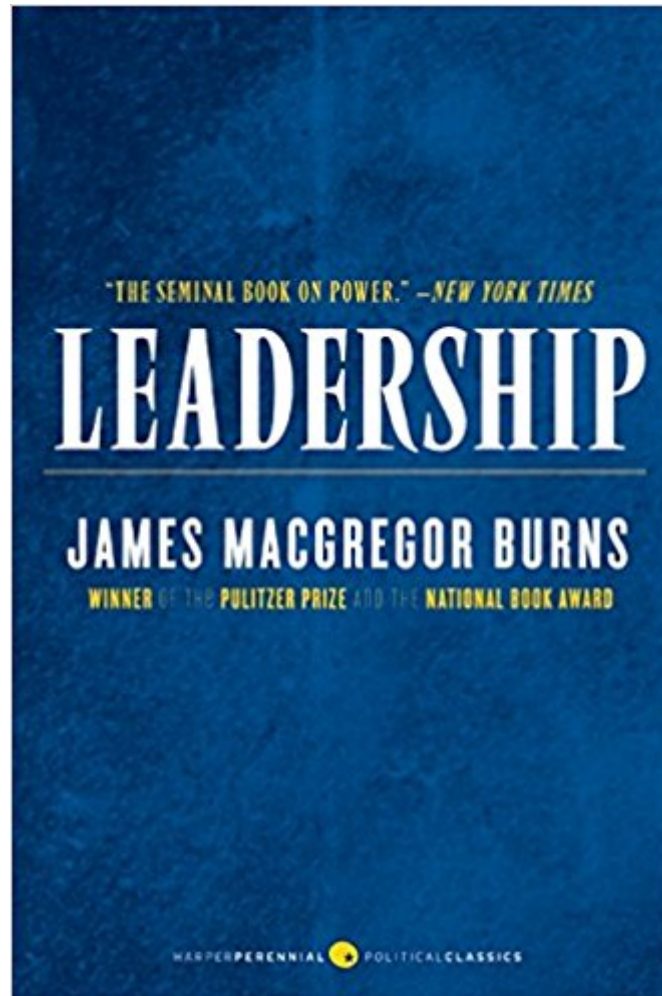




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Leadership (Harper Perennial Political Classics)



Synopsis

Pulitzer Prize-winning historian James MacGregor Burns devoted his legendary career to the study of leadership in all its aspectsâ "from politics to business. Leadership, Burns's pioneering study, introduces the highly influential theory of "transformational leadership," stating that the best leaders are those who inspire others to come together toward the achievement of higher aims. Featuring fascinating case studies drawn from history, Leadership is the classic text for anyone seeking to understand executive decision-making, the dynamics of influence, and moral leadership.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (44 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Leadership is a secondary source history/political science book drawing on historical examples, psychology, and some philosophical concepts on governance. Burns goal with the book is to establish a foundation for the study of leadership, combining the studies of the leaders themselves and the followers. It covers the individual traits of leaders, their relationship to followers, and how they managed to accomplish great things or have such great impact. This textbook has a number of stylistic problems that make it difficult to read, despite its interesting substance. Its organization is shaky and many of the chapters and sections have no clear intro or conclusion to tie his thesis together. The book is a dry, boring read that meanders between secondary sources, historical anecdotes, and the author's own biased perceptions. Burns seems to be trying to place a lateral beam across several pillars with his leadership school. This isn't nearly as groundbreaking as the

blurbs on the back of the book claim. Burns' conclusions are limited in scope, and don't leave a strong impression on the reader. He overuses Sigmund Freud, conceding that psychoanalysis of historical figures is not particularly accurate or helpful, then goes forward and uses it anyway. He identifies few patterns, constantly going back to the same old "blame the parents" approach to psychoanalysis. His occasional delving into the sexual habits of famous leaders was purely conjecture and not worthy of this text. Burns' narration of historical events and the rise of certain leaders is mediocre. It isn't heavy on detail, yet the prose is still difficult to follow. The historical examples do not clearly demonstrate his thesis.

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